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Labeling of Honey within the Three Distribution Channels Case Study of North West Region of Romania

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Abstract. Besides the functions (identification, presenting and describing functions) of the label, this compulsory element of a product is used more and more in promotion strategy. As a result of own processing of the existing information on the label, the label of the honey samples collected from North West Region of Romania have to be improved to be an ideal label. The labels from Apicola stores and main markets are too simple and common, requiring improvements to help the product to be promoted. Hypermarkets, supermarkets and stores label requires the smallest changes.

Keywords: label, standard, package, package amount, validity date

INTRODUCTION

The label is part of the package that contains a larger amount of information (Paina *et al.*, 1999) being a compulsory element for the product. The label must perform the function of identifying the product, presenting and describing the product by name, quantity, size, content, use and promoting the product through design and message (Malcomete, 1994).

The aims of this paper is to demonstrate the fact that it is of extreme importance that the labeling of food products is designed in such a way so as to be easily visible, clearly legible and appear in the same visual field (Directiva, 2000).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

From the three distribution channels were collected a total of 49 acacia honey samples, 58 multifloral honey samples and 27 linden honey samples. From Apicola stores of North West Region of Romania were collected 6 acacia honey samples, 5 multifloral honey samples and 3 linden honey samples. From main markets of North West Region of Romania were collected 17 acacia honey samples, 19 multifloral honey samples and 6 linden honey samples. From the hypermarkets, supermarkets and markets of North West Region of Romania were collected 26 acacia honey samples, 37 multifloral honey samples and 18 linden honey samples.

This paper presents existing information on the label of each sample as a result of own processing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the total samples of acacia honey (49) within the three distribution channels 91.8 % are labeled and 8.16 % do not have a label (*Fig. 1*). From the total samples of multifloral honey (58) within the three distribution channels 93.1 % are labeled and 6.9 % do not have a label (*Fig. 2*). All samples of linden honey (27) are labeled.

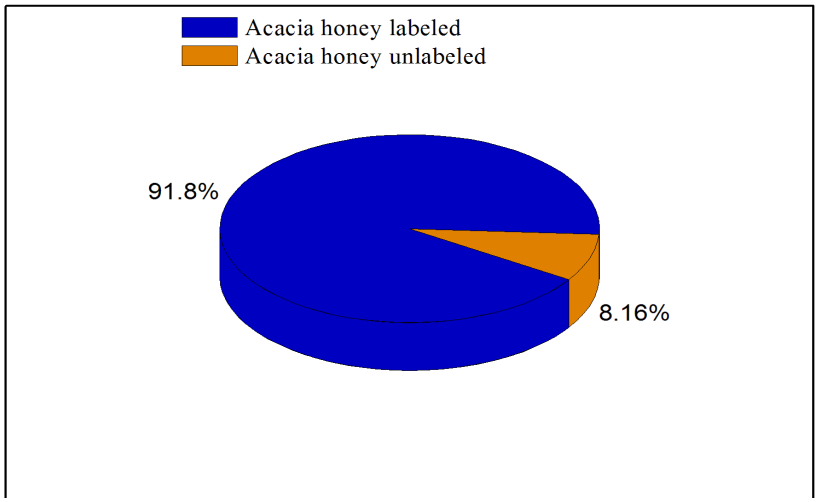

Fig. 1. The existence of label at acacia honey Source: Own calculation Origin 7

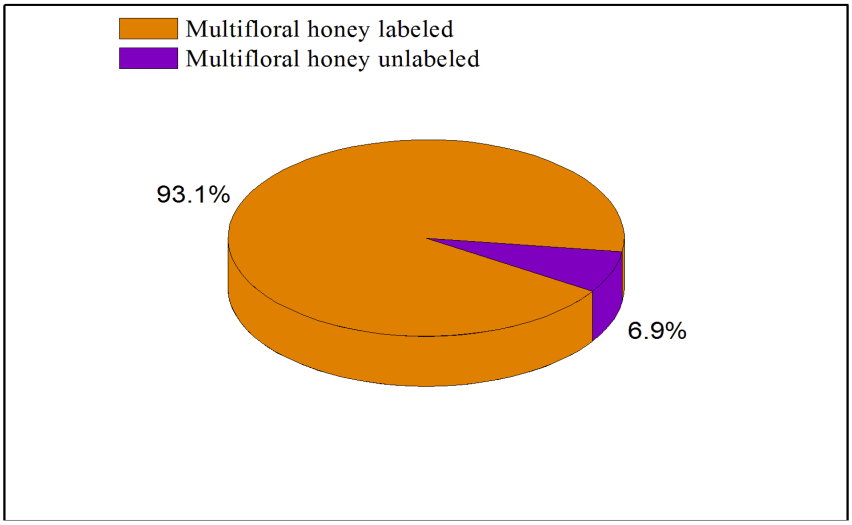

Fig. 2. The existence of label at multifloral honey Source: Own calculation in Origin 7

From all acacia honey samples collected from North West Region of Romania 20% have the standard STAS 784/2/89, which express the technical quality of honey on the label and 80% do not have this standard (STAS 784/2/89) on their label. This standard is a compulsory mention on the label of honey in Romania. From multifloral honey samples collected from North West Region of Romania 16.4% have the standard STAS 784/2/89 on the label and 83.6% do not have the standard on their label. From linden honey samples collected from North West Region of Romania 19.4% have the standard STAS 784/2/89 on the label and 80.6% do not have the standard on their label. Glass package preserves vitamins, protects original taste and freshness.

Acts as a natural barrier against bacteria and prevents damage to contents which might be due to changes in temperature (www.friendsofglass.com).From a total of 49 acacia honey samples, 87.6% were presented in glass package and 12.1% in plastic package (*Fig. 3*).

Multifloral honey samples were packed in a higher percentage in glass jars (96.3% from the total collected samples) and just 3.7% were presented in plastic package (*Fig. 4*).

From all collected linden honey 87.9% were presented in glass package and 12.1% were packed in plastic recipients (*Fig. 5*).

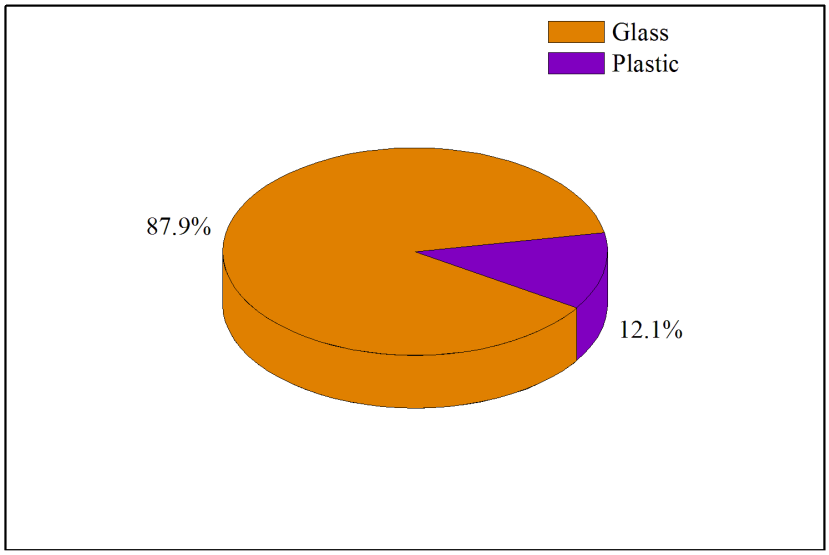

Fig. 3. Method of packing at acacia honey. Own calculation in Origin 7

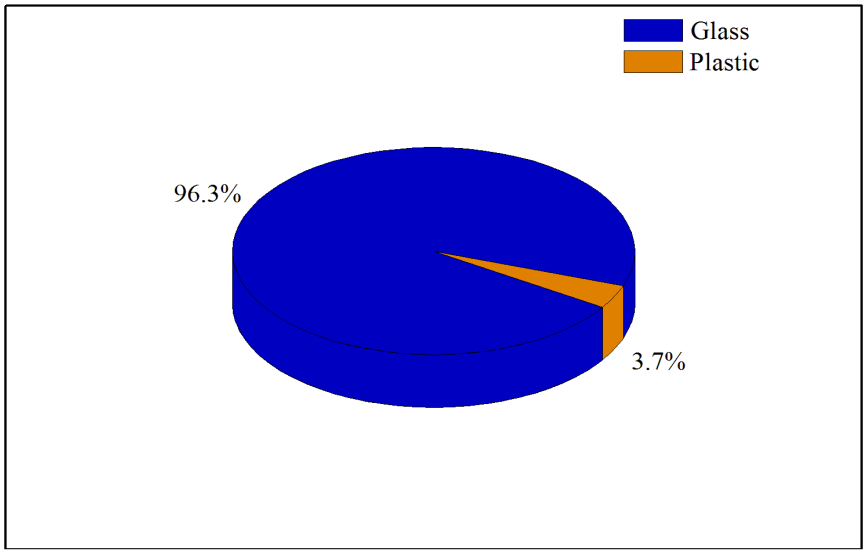

Fig. 4. Method of packing at multifloral honey Source: Own calculation in Origin 7

Package sizes of 250 grams, 400 grams, 450 grams and 500 grams are predominant in all types of honey. According to qualitative research, pack sizes of 400 grams and 500 grams are preferred by beekeepers from main markets. From all acacia honey samples, a percentage of 44.4% is written on the product label “store in cool and dry place”, and a percentage of 55.6% is not written on the product label “store in cool and dry place”. For multifloral honey samples this inscription appears in a proportion of 40% of the total sample and in a proportion of 60% do not appear this sentence. From all linden honey samples a percentage of 44.4% is written on the product label "store in in cool and dry place", and a percentage of 55.6% is not written on the product label "store in cool dry place". 38 acacia honey samples, 45 multifloral honey samples and 14 linden honey samples contain the phrase

"use best before ..." on the label, representing 72.4% of all samples collected. 7 samples of acacia honey 10 multifloral honey samples and 13 samples of linden honey do not contain the phrase "use best before ..." on the label, representing 27.6% of all samples collected (*Fig. 6*).

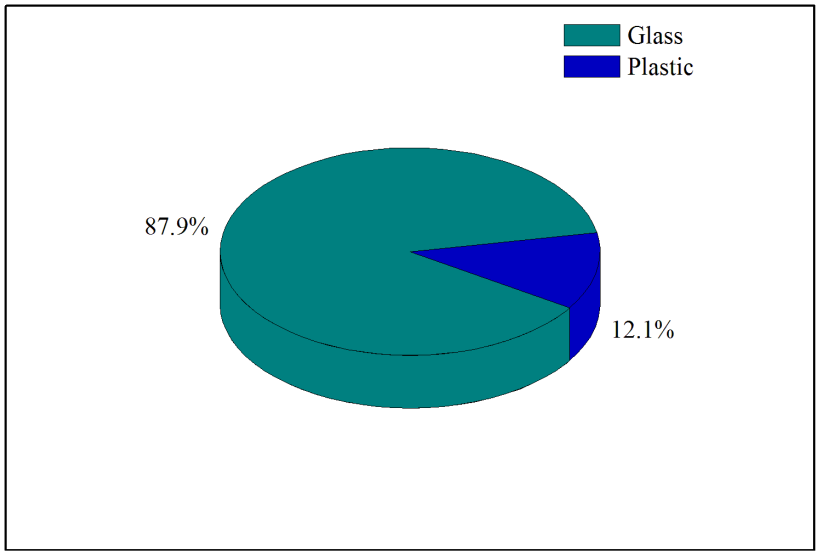

Fig. 5. Method of packing at linden honey Source: Own calculation in Origin 7

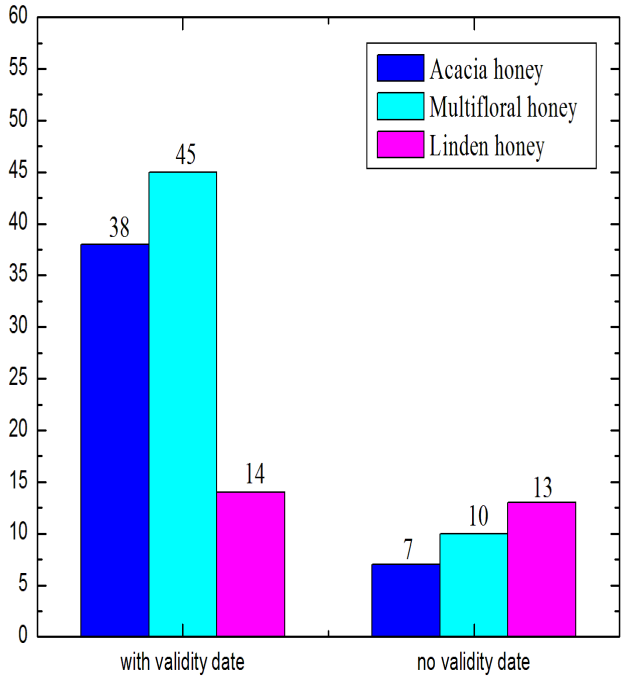

Fig. 6. The number of honey samples which present the date of validity on the label Source: Own calculation in Origin 7

The number of honey samples containing nutritional information, representing 26.9% of the total number of honey samples. This percentage is much smaller than the number of honey samples, which do not contain nutritional information, representing 73.1% of the total number of honey samples collected in the North West of Romania (*Fig. 7*).

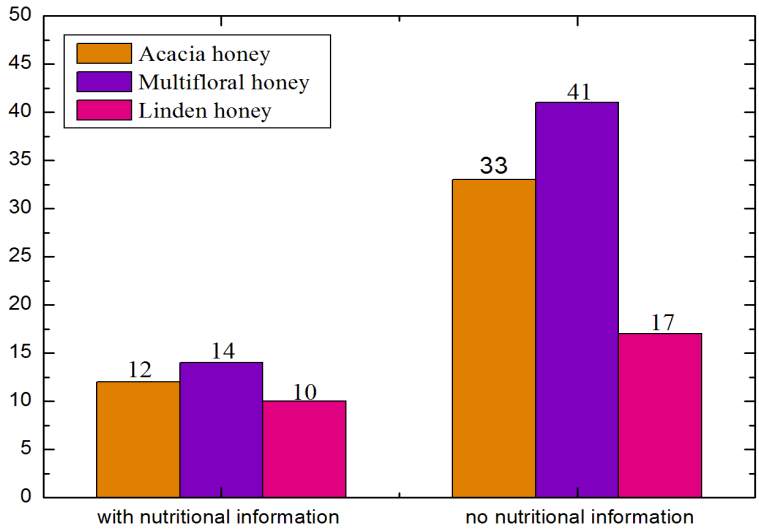

Fig. 7. The number of honey samples which contain nutritional information on the label
Source: Own calculation in Origin 7

Following the completion of a statistics existing information on the labels of the 134 honey samples collected from the North West of Romania the lack of information required on the label of a product. Therefore the image below it is proposed an ideal label, containing all the information required by Directive 2000/13/EC.

Fig. 8. Ideal label, Source: own processing

CONCLUSION

The present research paper highlights the compulsory label terms of food products as compared to the existing terms on the label of honey. The research shows the fact that an information campaign on the benefits of a label rich in information will help to improve the labeling of honey.

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